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Senate aims to clean up scrap tires

LANSING – The Senate today passed a package of bills that would help eliminate more than 10 million scrap tires located throughout Michigan, said Sen. Michelle McManus, a key sponsor of the package.

The legislation would revise a current program to more efficiently and effectively clean up the tires and redefine tires as commodities so they can be sold and re-used to make other products.

“It has been estimated that there are close to 11 million scrap tires in piles around our state. Besides being a huge eyesore and safety hazard, the tires are causing environmental damage in our local communities,” said McManus, R-Lake Leelanau. “Our goal is to get the tires cleaned up and ideally convert them into something useful, such as athletic tracks, playground surfaces, building materials or road materials.”

The bills in the package would:

- Create a new category of scrap tires designated as a “commodity”;
- Regulate the delivery of scrap tires to various locations;
- Regulate the storage of scrap tires and ensure adequate distance between tire piles to prevent fires;
- Limit growth and size of tire piles and require that 75-percent of tires at a collection site must be recycled or re-used for resource recovery;
- Require the DEQ to submit regular reports on the effectiveness of the program and include ways to encourage the reuse and safe storage of scrap tires; and
- Extend the sunset on the current scrap tire clean-up funding program that provides grants to local communities for tire disposal.

“We need to get these tires back into the marketplace where they will be useful again,” McManus said. “It is important to ensure long-term success to keep tires from posing a danger to public health, safety and the environment.”

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